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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAN SIX US GENERALS AGAINST
US DEFENSE SECRETARY DONALD RUMSFELD US IMMIGRATION
POLICY MIDDLE EAST ARGENTINE JUDICIAL SECURITY
ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR BORDON'S STATEMENTS ON A/S THOMAS
SHANNON AND THE SOA 04/17/06

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Weekend stories cover six US retired military allegedly asking for US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's resignation; US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urging the UN to adopt a resolution on Iran; the implications of the US immigration policy; the US policy on the Middle East and Israel; Argentina's judicial security and foreign investment; interview with Argentine Ambassador to Washington, DC, Jose Octavio Bordon, who praised both A/S Thomas Shannon and the Summit of the Americas; and the visits of US Senator Charles Grassley and David Scott Palmer to Buenos Aires.

2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "The US wants to use force against Iran"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" reports (04/14)
"Yesterday, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urged the UN to adopt a resolution on Iran... based on Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which foresees the use of force.

"The request from the head of US diplomacy's worsened even further the open-ended crisis, which yesterday pushed oil prices to record levels and unprecedented values in some markets to over 70 dollars per barrel."

- "The US pressures the UN to be able to use force against Iran"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," writes (04/14) "In a gesture of real fortification, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice yesterday urged the UN to adopt a resolution against Iran to allow for the use of force.

"... While the USG itself believes it will take Iran more than ten years to build a nuclear weapon, Rice is already thinking of using force against the current government.

"However, Russia's and, to a certain point, China's reluctance to support (even economic) sanctions against Iran weakens Rice's statements, at least at the UN."

- "US military ask for Rumsfeld's resignation"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (04/15) "For the first time since the beginning of the war in Iraq, an increasing group of retired generals decided to break silence and asked for the resignation of US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who is worn out after more

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than three years of occupation and an ongoing constant situation of violence after the removal of Saddam Hussein.

"Now that US support for the war is at a new historical low, Generals Paul Eaton, Anthony Zinni, Gregory Newbold, John Batiste, John Riggs and Charles Swannack made the unusual decision to openly criticize the US Pentagon's political chief, although President George W. Bush reiterated his support for the government official.

"... Powerful circles blamed Rumsfeld for the insufficient number of troops sent to Iraq, the lack of previous training for the occupation, serious mistakes made in the weeks, months and years after the removal of Saddam and the abuses committed in the Abu Ghraib prison."

- "Threats to Iran and the rebellion of generals"

Gustavo Sierra, columnist of leading "Clarín," comments (04/16) "The resolve of the US military men not only introduced the sound of swords in a country in which a coup d'état is unthinkable but shows that its society is fed up with the arrogance of Bush's men.

"Six high-ranking retired generals ... made statements against US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. They accused him of having made constant errors in Iraq and not having listened to their criticism of the military venture. All of them mentioned Rumsfeld's infinite arrogance.

"Another point of agreement among those generals is that they oppose a fast bombing campaign against Iran. They believe this could only worsen the situation in the Middle East and Central Asia.

"US President Bush defended once again his minister, as he had done previously during the crisis due to the Abu Ghraib prison tortures. Rumsfeld, 73, as well as VP Dick Cheney and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice are Bush's ideological supporters. Removing one of them could mean losing even more political weight. And, according to opinion polls, his support is only slightly above 30%."

- "The silent rebellion of generals"

Mario Diament, director of the School of Journalism at Miami International University, writes (04/15) "In a country where the possibility of a military coup d'état is unthinkable, the rebellion of the military has emerged as the tip of an iceberg whose base is much broader and deeper than anyone is willing to admit.

"For the moment, criticism is focused exclusively on the US Secretary of Defense as a way to preserve the president, but if Bush ignores these claims, as many

have predicted, there is no guarantee that the Teflon layer protecting the White House could not peel off."

- "When generals themselves are distrustful"

Oscar Raul Cardoso, international columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (04/15) "... No less than six retired military officials have publicly asked for (US Defense Secretary) Rumsfeld's resignation and even stated that

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the invasion of Iraq was a useless war that had little or nothing to do with the fight against the 'terrorist threat' alleged by Washington...

"... It would be advisable not to be carried away by the US obsession with the Iranian nuclear program because the real threat does not come from this side at least for now. Iran's uranium enrichment was barely 3.5%, which is too little to consider war materiel...

"In the most extreme of cases, why would Iran promote more instability in the region than what it already has, due to the contribution of nuclear weapons owned by Israel, for which there is no international supervision?

"Bush's problem with Iran seems to be not medium-term security but the nature of the Iranian regime, an Islamic theocracy he wants to replace, as a 'legacy' of his presidency... The 'bomb' would be only an excuse, such as the 'WMD' that have never been found in Iraq."

- "Primitivism"

Marcelo Cantelmi, international editor of leading "Clarín," writes (04/16) "It is unacceptable although not unexplainable. The mix of national fanaticism (which is bolstered by the government) and a serious concentration of wealth may be the bottom line of the persecution of minorities in the US.

"It is a substitute for racial discrimination, which prevailed in the US until 50 years ago. Actually, it is political primitivism but it is clear that it is not an exclusive misbehavior on behalf of this society, as demonstrated by the European examples and some others in the world's periphery. The problem is the model, which is unable to solve the contradiction created by the 'human excess' it generates, which,

although enslaved in a way, can be neither repressed nor ignored."

- "Technicolor dreams"

Gwynne Dyer, international columnist of liberal, English-language "Buenos Aires Herald," writes (04/17) "... Israel cannot expect to have Washington's support for expanding its borders in such a dramatic way from any subsequent administration, whether Republican or Democratic. No previous administration in Washington would have backed such a project either. The Bush administration is an aberration, both in its contempt for international law and in the degree to which it sees US national interests and the desires of the current Israeli government as identical...

"Olmert's government can build walls, dig ditches, move settlers around, proclaim that Israel's eternal borders are now some distance to the east of where they were last week, maybe even get the Bush administration to agree to the change, but none of it will have any legal force."

- 'We are interested in capturing US investment in public infrastructure'"

Jorge Sosa, on special assignment in Washington for business-financial "El Cronista," writes (04/17) "In the US-Argentine bilateral agenda there is a new mandate written in capital letters - capturing direct US investment. At least, this is now the Kirchner administration's main interest, according to Argentine Ambassador to Washington Jose Octavio Bordon during an interview with 'El Cronista'... Bordon asserted that the Government's main interest changed after the country's debt renegotiation and its advanced payment to the IMF. It now wants to seek investment in technology and infrastructure, 'as part of a new macroeconomic stage in Argentina.' All this happens in spite of the ban on meat exports and the impact this brought in overseas markets.

"... Asked about the visit of A/S Tom Shannon to Buenos Aires last January, Bordon answered 'Shannon's visit was very positive. Ever since we took power, he played a very important role... I have always considered that even though there was clear disagreement on some issues at the Summit (of the Americas), there was almost full agreement on some other topics."

- "New US Pentagon official for Latin America"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," comments (04/15) "According to governmental and legislative sources, Roger Pardo Maurer, one of the most confrontational and polemic members of the Bush administration in the US-Latin American ties, could leave his position as deputy assistant Secretary at the US Pentagon by the end of the month.

"... According to all consulted sources, his successor will have to have a clear goal - healing channels of communication with regional allies, such as Argentina, and improving coordination of policy within the administration."

- "The two heels of a new Achilles"

Mariano Grondona, columnist of daily-of-record "La Nacion," opines (04/16) "... In the short run, Argentina's economic policy can sustain itself a little more. In the medium term, the lack of investment due to a hostile climate for free markets will be made felt. This is particularly serious in the energy sector, in which the Argentine government has scolded oil companies for not having invested and allowing the country to depend on other energy producing countries as though the decision to make investments depended on their mere willingness and not on figures.

"The government has done nothing but scare foreign investment away, which should be brought under control as it was not done in the 90s but whose potential cannot be substituted."

- "An FTA between the US and Argentina is possible"

Jorge Elias, columnist of daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (04/14) "... The head of the US Senate Financial Committee, Republican Charles Grassley, warned that Peru and Colombia appear now in the free trade bilateral deals agenda and he said that Brazil and Argentina could also reach this sort of deals,

just as Uruguay.

"... According to Grassley, 'I noticed that Argentina is closer to the US than Brazil in WTO negotiations.'

"The US legislator noticed in Argentina a greater acceptance of the US-promoted position and he speaks even of the possibility of an FTA between the two countries regardless of the fact that it could be questioned by the other Mercosur countries."

- "'It is important that Latin America open its doors to free trade'"

Natalia Labruna, columnist of business-financial, center-right "InfoBae," comments (04/17) "During his visit to Argentina, the academician asserted that almost all the countries of the region managed to increase their trade and investment flow toward and from the US, which is part of the results 'of this new economic opening.'

"Asked whether the tilt to the left in the region could affect its ties with the US, Palmer answered that he does not think so. 'This is the outcome of democratic procedures. Every country has its own economic policy and it is the miracle of the 20th and 21st centuries. It is clear that the Latin American governments are more inclined to the left than to the right.

"'Except for Venezuela..., this 'wave' has not represented a challenge or a threat to the US, because presidents-elect and the people accompanying them have a fairly pragmatic (not ideological) position. If we look to Uruguay, with its ability to increase its exports to the US without an FTA, we see that the ideological factor, which used to affect bilateral ties thirty years ago, no longer does so.'"

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